

MINNESOTA  ORCHESTRA

SHOWCASE | MAY / JUNE 2022



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from the editor

The *Star Tribune's* front page for October 12, 2000, documents a different era, recapping the previous night's debate between Vice President Al Gore and Texas Governor George W. Bush, as well as the Minnesota Wild's first-ever home game. That day, the emerging terrorist group al-Qaeda bombed the U.S.S. Cole in Yemen. Audiences in Orchestra Hall that night didn't know they were witnessing the start of a new era for classical music in Minnesota, as Osmo Vänskä first appeared as a guest conductor with the Minnesota Orchestra. Vänskä was soon named music director designate, started his post in fall 2003 and has since become one of the Orchestra's most beloved and consequential figures.

While some elements of Vänskä's tenure were predictable—such as the championing of Jean Sibelius' music and an emphasis on recording, as he had done to acclaim with Finland's Lahti Symphony—others couldn't have been anticipated. The Orchestra drew international headlines for its 2015 tour to Cuba and 2018 visit to South Africa and, sadly, for a 16-month lockout that brought about Vänskä's resignation and reinstatement. The ensemble earned its first Grammy and, with ingenuity and new initiatives, survived the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. As Vänskä leads his final concerts in June before completing his tenure, his legacy comes into focus, and the curtain rises on the Orchestra's next era. Bravo, maestro—we look forward to seeing you visit the podium for many years to come!

Carl Schroeder

Carl Schroeder, Editor
 editor@mnorch.org

about the cover

Osmo Vänskä—who in June conducts his last full concert with the Minnesota Orchestra in his record-tying 19 years as music director—is shown on this issue's cover leading last September's season opening concert. At the front of the violins is Concertmaster Erin Keefe, who is featured in June as soloist in a Mendelssohn double concerto alongside pianist Juho Pohjonen. Photo: Tony Nelson

concerts

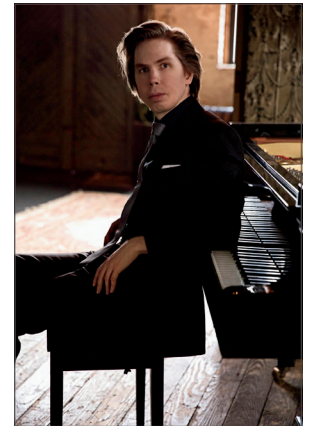
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FROM LEFT: Benjamin Ealovega; Courtesy of the Omaha Symphony; Lisa-Marie Mazzucco

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Erin Keefe, page 44
 Photo: Joel Larson

Minnesota Orchestra

Osmo Vänskä, conductor

Kevin Puts, Composer Institute director | Fred Child, host

Friday, May 6, 2022, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

With this concert we gratefully recognize Kathryn and Charles Cunningham for their generous contribution to the Minnesota Orchestra.

Sam Wu	<i>Wind Map</i>	ca. 10'
Adeliia Faizullina	<i>Bolghar</i>	ca. 7'
Ryan Lindveit	<i>Close Up at a Distance</i> Zoom In Verdant Patchwork Zoom Out/In Urban Grids The Overview Effect	ca. 12'
Henry Dorn	<i>Transitions</i>	ca. 10'
I N T E R M I S S I O N		
Bobby Ge	<i>Remember To Have Fun</i> Master of None Think About What You've Done Remember to Have Fun	ca. 10'
Nina Shekhar	<i>Lumina</i>	ca. 11'
Molly Joyce	<i>Over and Under</i> <i>Mary Jo Gothmann, organ</i>	ca. 9'

Program notes and profiles of the composers, soloists, Kevin Puts, Fred Child and *This Is Minnesota Orchestra* broadcast host Brian Newhouse are provided in the Composer Institute booklet. Osmo Vänskä's profile appears on page 10 of *Showcase*.

The audience is invited to stay in the auditorium after the concert for a Q&A with the composers, Kevin Puts and Osmo Vänskä.

thank you

The May 2022 Minnesota Orchestra Composer Institute is generously sponsored by The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, The Amphion Foundation and an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Minnesota Orchestra concerts are broadcast live on Friday evenings on stations of [YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio](#), including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities. The May 6 concert will also be broadcast live on [Twin Cities PBS \(TPT-2\)](#) and available for streaming at minnesotaorchestra.org and on the Orchestra's social media channels.



Minnesota Orchestra

Xian Zhang, conductor

Adam Kuenzel, flute

Friday, May 13, 2022, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall
Saturday, May 14, 2022, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

Qigang Chen	<i>L'Éloignement</i> for String Orchestra	ca. 16'
Carl Nielsen	Concerto for Flute and Orchestra Allegro moderato Allegretto <i>Adam Kuenzel, flute</i>	ca. 18'
	I N T E R M I S S I O N	ca. 20'
Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky	Suite from <i>The Sleeping Beauty</i> , Opus 66a Introduction: La Fée des lilas Adagio: Pas d'action Panorama Valse	ca. 18'
Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky	<i>Francesca da Rimini</i> , Opus 32	ca. 24'

thank you

This concert is sponsored by **Christina and Terry Schopfer**.

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Xian Zhang, conductor

Xian Zhang, who is in her sixth season as music director of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, also holds the positions of principal guest conductor of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and conductor emeritus of Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi, of which she was music director from 2009 to 2016. Her recent and upcoming engagements include concerts in Europe with the Philharmonia Orchestra, La Verdi in Milan, Spanish National Orchestra, orchestra of Komische Oper in Berlin, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Warsaw Philharmonic and Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, as well as North American engagements with the Los Angeles

Philharmonic and the orchestras of San Francisco, Philadelphia, Detroit, Montreal, NAC Ottawa and Toronto. Also active in the opera world, she will make her debut with the Metropolitan Opera in 2024. She has previously served as principal guest conductor of the BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of Wales, and as associate conductor of the New York Philharmonic. More: imgartists.com.



Adam Kuenzel, flute

Principal Flute Adam Kuenzel joined the Minnesota Orchestra in 1990. He has regularly appeared as soloist at Orchestra Hall, including for the 2007 world premiere of Stanislaw Skrowaczewski's *Fantasies for Flute*

and Orchestra, *Il Piffero della Notte*, with the composer conducting. In recent years he has also performed Bernstein's *Halil* and the premiere of Manuel Sosa's *Eloquentia: Espacio para Flauta y Orquesta*; the latter work, which was written for Kuenzel, garnered the composer a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship in 2011. In 2017 he was selected to premiere Laura Schwendinger's *Aurora* for flute and piano, which was commissioned by the National Flute Association for its annual convention, held that year in Minneapolis. He has been a guest artist at the Aspen Music Festival, Grand Teton Music Festival, Spoleto Festival, St. Bart's Music Festival in the French West Indies and Oregon Bach Festival. He has also appeared as guest principal flute with the Boston, Chicago and Dallas symphony orchestras, and with the Seattle Opera. More: minnesotaorchestra.org

Kuenzel describes Carl Nielsen's *Flute Concerto*, which he performs at this week's concerts, as resembling "a circus train, with each idea a different car, but all linked together with sudden turns of mood."

one-minute notes

Chen: *L'Éloignement*

Qigang Chen's *L'Éloignement* is a poignant work for strings inspired by a Chinese proverb and the vital force of renewal and rebirth, with music of conflicting moods that the composer calls "happy and sad, nostalgic and exciting."

Nielsen: *Flute Concerto*

Carl Nielsen's *Flute Concerto* is a compact piece in just two movements, charming and pastoral, yet also quirky, with a brash trombone asserting itself as the flute's rival.

Tchaikovsky: *Suite from The Sleeping Beauty, Francesca da Rimini*

Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Sleeping Beauty* presents a tale of magical spells, a long-delayed romance and a royal wedding full of color. A soaring waltz, one of the most popular ever written, is among the highlights of the suite performed here. His symphonic poem *Francesca da Rimini* tells a darker tale from the epic poetry of Dante, of two adulterous lovers who are caught, murdered and cast into eternal torment. Unfolding in three sections, it contains some of Tchaikovsky's stormiest music.



Qigang Chen

Born: August 28, 1951,
Shanghai, China

L'Éloignement for String Orchestra

Premiered: June 8, 2013

Chinese-born Qigang Chen was just beginning music lessons when the Cultural Revolution descended upon his country. His father—a calligrapher, painter, and an administrator in the Beijing Academy of Fine Arts—was sent to a labor camp, and the young Chen was kept in confinement and put through ideological re-education. But as luck would have it, he was just old enough to become a member of the famous “class of 1978,” named for the year conservatories reopened in China. He won one of just 26 spots from among two thousand applicants who passed the entry exams for the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing.

from China to France

Chen remained at the Conservatory for five years, then, in 1984, moved to Paris to study privately for four years with Olivier Messiaen, who took on Chen as his last student after leaving the Conservatoire.

In 1989, Chen received his Diplôme de Musicologie at the University of Paris IV-Sorbonne. Awards and public recognition soon followed. In 1990, he was chosen “Musician of the Year” by the Chinese press, in 1992 he was awarded the Nadia and Lili Boulanger grant, and in 2000 earned the Grand Prize of the City of Paris. Commissions began pouring in, many of them from French sources, and Charles Dutoit became one of his champions. Chen’s reputation received a further boost when the film (followed soon after by the ballet) *Raise the Red Lantern* became an international hit. He was invited to become music director for the opening ceremonies of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. He has been a French citizen since 1992. In 2013, the French government conferred on him the decoration of Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. His violin concerto, *La joie de la souffrance*, dedicated to his late son Yuli, was premiered at the 2017 Beijing Music Festival with Maxim Vengerov as soloist.

words from the composer

L'Éloignement, Chen’s 15-minute work for 34 strings, was composed on commission from the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, which gave the first performance at Shanghai’s International

Arts Festival in 2003. The composer has provided the following comments:

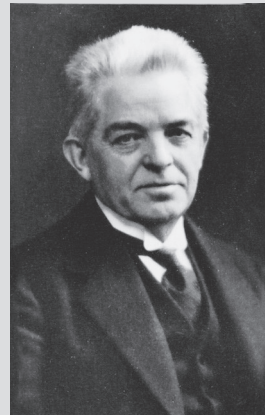
“There is a Chinese proverb that says when a man is uprooted, he gains vital force. If he remains stationary, he cannot flourish. Renewal of his surroundings brings new opportunities; whatever changes there may be, large or small, are always experienced like a great rebirth.

“Still, while this brings hope and excitement, change also means separation from the immediate environment, and from family and friends. It is this sense of distancing, or estrangement, that is described in the peasant song from northwest China, ‘Zou Xi Kou’ (Going beyond the western gorges). A love-song upon the departure of a beloved one, plaintive and nostalgic, its melody is used in *L'Éloignement* because it retains a basic simplicity and because it gives the composer the possibility to express therein his own estrangement.

“Laid out as a rondo with variations, *L'Éloignement* depicts separation, disorder, imagination, and yearning. The music is both happy and sad, nostalgic and exciting, all of which account for the conflicting moods of the departing one.”

Instrumentation: string orchestra

Program note by Robert Markow.



Carl Nielsen

Born: June 9, 1865,
Sortelung, Denmark

Died: October 2, 1931,
Copenhagen, Denmark

Concerto for Flute and Orchestra

Premiered: October 21, 1926

Carl Nielsen supported himself and his family for many years as a violinist, but he had an unusually close relationship with wind instruments throughout his life. As a boy of 14 he played trumpet, signal horn and trombone in a military band, and late in life he wrote a number of works for wind instruments. After hearing the Copenhagen Wind Quintet play Mozart in 1921, Nielsen became good friends with the members of that ensemble. He wrote a Wind Quintet for them in 1922, then decided to write a concerto for each of the Quintet’s members. Nielsen completed

a Flute Concerto (1926) and a Clarinet Concerto (1928), but his death at 66 of heart disease robbed us of the planned concertos for oboe, bassoon and horn.

“...with its gentle nature”

Nielsen felt that every separate instrument had its own unique character, and he once remarked that “each instrument is like a person who sleeps, whom I have to wake to life.” It has been suggested that the Flute Concerto takes its character from the flutist for whom it was written, Holger Gilbert Jespersen. Jespersen has been described as “elegant” and “Gallic,” and some have been quick to hear these qualities in the concerto written for him, but Nielsen was probably writing for the instrument rather than for a specific performer. He said of the flute: “It is at home in Arcadia and prefers pastoral moods. A composer must fit in with its gentle nature.” Nielsen’s Flute Concerto—in two movements that last only about 20 minutes—is often “pastoral” in mood, but it is also a quirky, original, charming (and very funny) piece of music.

Nielsen wrote this concerto while on vacation in Italy in the fall of 1926 (the manuscript is dated October 1 in Florence), and Jespersen was soloist at the first performance, which took place as part of an all-Nielsen concert in Paris three weeks later. That concert was a huge success (Maurice Ravel and Arthur Honegger were in the audience, and Nielsen was awarded the Legion of Honor the following day), but Nielsen was not fully satisfied with the concerto. He re-wrote its ending, and Jespersen was again the soloist when this final version was premiered in Oslo on November 9, 1926. That change, as we shall see, was crucial to giving this music its special flavor.

the music: a concerto with an unexpected guest

allegro moderato. The *Allegro moderato* springs to life with a fierce gesture from the orchestra, but this will prove to be a false direction, quickly corralled by the flute’s more refined entrance, and the movement settles down for what seems at first a normal exposition. This is based on two ideas: a dancing, staccato theme announced by the solo flute, and a more flowing melody marked *dolce*, introduced by the orchestra and taken up by the flute. The development begins, and at this point an unexpected guest shows up: the concerto’s “other” principal player, a bass trombone, intrudes and becomes the rival of the solo flute. The trombone functions in this concerto much like a pesky neighbor who feels free to lean over the fence and comment on everything going on in your backyard. Here, over pounding timpani, it makes a rude entrance, going on at length while the flute scurries about in dismay. And then the development resumes as if nothing had happened.

At this point Nielsen introduces the movement’s third theme, an absolutely lovely idea that is sung glowingly by the flute. Nielsen

offers his soloist an impressive cadenza, first accompanied by timpani and then joined by a saucy solo clarinet. The orchestra returns, the movements themes are reviewed briefly (it is altogether typical of this concerto that a new one should show up in the closing measures), and gradually the soloist leads the orchestra to a calm close in G-flat major.

allegretto. The *Allegretto* begins violently with harmonically unstable attacks from the orchestra, and once again the solo flute restores order with its dancing entrance, marked *grazioso* and set in unambiguous G major. A brief *Adagio ma non troppo* recalls the theme introduced in the closing moments of the first movement; this rises to a rather strident climax before the *Allegretto* resumes. And from here on, things really take some surprising turns. At the coda, marked *Tempo di marcia*, Nielsen re-bars the movement’s main theme in 6/8, something Mozart would do occasionally.

At the Paris premiere, the concerto marched home calmly in D major, but after hearing that performance, Nielsen rethought the ending and produced a new one for the Oslo premiere, more in keeping with the concerto’s wry sense of humor. Our old friend the bass trombone shows up again and apparently has had a few drinks while he was gone—now he takes over the *Tempo di marcia* theme for himself, then insists on singing the flute’s lovely third theme from the first movement. However rude it may be, the trombone also knows what it’s doing. Its sleazy glissandos now nudge the concerto toward the “correct” key of E major, and finally the concerto dances to its wonderful close: the flute tries desperately to maintain its elegant bearing, but it is the tipsy trombone that gets the last word.

Instrumentation: solo flute with orchestra comprising 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, bass trombone, timpani and strings

Program note by **Eric Bromberger**.



Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Born: May 7, 1840,
Votkinsk, Russia

Died: November 6, 1893,
St. Petersburg, Russia

Suite from *The Sleeping Beauty*, Opus 66a

Premiered: January 15, 1890
(complete ballet)

In the spring of 1888, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky was visited by the Director of the Imperial Theatres in St. Petersburg, Ivan Vsevolozhsky, who proposed that Tchaikovsky compose the score for a new ballet. It would be based on the fairy tale *La belle au bois dormant*, originally collected by the 17th-century French writer Charles Perrault and published as part of his *Contes de la mere l'oye* (Tales of Mother Goose). Tchaikovsky's one previous ballet, *Swan Lake*, had been a disaster at its premiere in 1877, and the composer was wary of another such experience. But he was nevertheless attracted to Perrault's tale. He sketched the new ballet between October 1888 and the spring of 1889 and completed the orchestration on September 1, 1889.

The premiere of *The Sleeping Beauty* at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg on January 15, 1890—attended by the czar—was a huge success. Tchaikovsky, who was perpetually worried about having written himself out, could finally take pleasure in one of his own compositions: “The subject is so poetic (and) it lends itself so admirably to music that I enjoyed composing it very much and worked with a zeal and eagerness that always makes for good results.” For once, the critics agreed, and *The Sleeping Beauty* has been universally judged one of Tchaikovsky's finest works.

a familiar fairy tale

The *Sleeping Beauty* tale is familiar from the Walt Disney version and other iterations. The infant Princess Aurora is blessed by six good fairies at her christening, but the evil Carabosse—who was not invited—shows up in a carriage drawn by rats and pronounces a curse: one day Princess Aurora will prick her finger and die. The Lilac Fairy softens the curse: the princess will not die, but will fall into a slumber for a hundred years, to be awakened by the kiss of her true love. Sixteen years later, at a ball where she is courted by four suitor-princes, Aurora is given a spindle by the disguised Carabosse, pricks her finger, and falls into a deep sleep along with the rest of the court. One hundred years later, Prince Florimund fights his way through the thicket that the Lilac Fairy has caused

to grow up around the castle, defeats the evil Carabosse, and discovers the sleeping princess. He awakens her with a kiss, and a wedding celebration soon follows.

the music: a satisfying suite

In its full form, the ballet comprises a Prologue and three acts. The Prologue sets the scene and introduces the characters, while Act I begins with the celebration of Princess Aurora's 16th birthday and concludes with Carabosse's curse coming true. Act II brings the arrival of Prince Florimund, the awakening of the princess, and their engagement. Act III is a set of characteristic dances celebrating their wedding. The *Sleeping Beauty* Suite heard at this week's performances presents four well-known excerpts from the ballet—arranged not in their chronological sequence in the ballet, but rather to provide a musically satisfying concert suite.

introduction: la fée des lilas. The Prologue's beginning is full of energy and expectancy; after its dramatic opening gesture, the English horn sings a flowing melody that will be associated with the Lilac Fairy and her protective intervention after Carabosse's curse.

adagio: pas d'action. The soaring *Adagio*, sometimes called the *Rose Adagio*, is the music from Act I that accompanies the scene in which the four suitor-princes approach the princess, each with the gift of a rose; the teenaged princess dances this movement, which begins with a long harp cadenza, before the four princes.

panorama. Next comes a selection from Act II: elegant music that accompanies Prince Florimund's approach to the castle where Aurora lies sleeping. The meter and accompaniment are in 6/8, but the violins' silky melody seems to be in 3/4, and those two rhythms tug nicely at each other throughout.

valse. The famous *Waltz* comes from Act I, where it is part of the princess' 16th birthday celebration. Danced by villagers carrying garlands of flowers, it is sometimes known as the Garland Waltz.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 cornets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, tamtam, glockenspiel, harp and strings

Program note by **Eric Bromberger**.

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

***Francesca da Rimini*, Opus 32**

Premiered: March 9, 1877

In the fifth Canto of the epic 14th-century narrative poem *Divine Comedy*, Dante meets Francesca da Rimini and her lover, Paolo, as he descends into the second circle of Hell. The lovers' tale is one of tragedy and horror, beginning as Francesca is tricked into marrying Paolo's brother, the cruel Gianciotto. When Gianciotto discovers the affair, he murders his brother and Francesca in a jealous rage. When they arrive in Hell, they are condemned to spend an eternity in the Second Circle (reserved for those who commit sins borne of passion and lust), caught in a violent windstorm and cursed never to walk on solid ground ever again.

inflamed with desire

Tchaikovsky's programmatic symphonic fantasy based on Francesca and Paolo's tale is just one of three pieces written during the Romantic period inspired by the tragically doomed lovers. Sergei Rachmaninoff wrote his opera *Francesca da Rimini* in the early 1900s, based on a libretto written by Tchaikovsky's brother, Modest. Franz Liszt's *Dante* Symphony also contains a musical depiction of Francesca and Paolo, written a full decade before Tchaikovsky composed his symphonic fantasy in late 1876. Tchaikovsky initially considered writing an opera on Francesca earlier that same year but those plans were ultimately scrapped.

But it seems that Francesca's tale proved too alluring a tale for Tchaikovsky to ignore completely; in a letter written during the summer months of 1876, he wrote to Modest that he had been "inflamed with a desire to write a symphonic poem on *Francesca*" after he read Canto V. The work was completed by October of 1876. Its premiere was given in Moscow in March 1877 by Nikolay Rubinstein and the Russian Musical Society. It quickly became a popular work and a personal favorite of Tchaikovsky, though he would come to temper this stance later in his life.

the music: a journey to the depths

Francesca da Rimini consists of three main sections, as it corresponds to Dante's journey and meeting of Francesca. In his own program note for the work, Tchaikovsky includes a detailed account of what happens in the plot as the music unfolds.

"...Dante...descends into the second circle of the Hellish abyss. Here the walls echo with cries of despair...Violent, Hellish whirlwinds carry away tormented souls..."

Before beginning composing *Francesca* in earnest, Tchaikovsky traveled to Bayreuth to hear a complete performance of Wagner's

Ring cycle, and later admitted a direct influence from the German composer on *Francesca*. That influence manifests itself most clearly in this first section through its use of ambiguous harmonies, repeated use of the "Devil's interval," or the tritone, and thickly orchestrated passages which give the listener no rest. The slow, macabre opening gives way to Tchaikovsky's depiction of the windstorm, an orchestral cacophony that revels in its own chaos. The strings play fast, repeated notes frantically into the highest registers over and over while the brass answers imposingly, a tornado of sound and color with no clear beginning, middle or end.

"Dante calls out to these tortured souls, and asks them for what terrible crimes they were being punished. Francesca's spirit, drenched with tears, recounts their pitiful tale."

Dante has now noticed Francesca and Paolo and called to them in the storm. The chaos of the storm dies down as a solo voice, the clarinet, begins playing one of Tchaikovsky's most elegantly crafted, heart-wrenching melodies, which soon overtakes the entire orchestra. This music yearns, sighs and pulses as Francesca tells her tale. Tchaikovsky's gift for composing beautifully poignant melodies shines throughout this middle section.

"...Francesca's spirit, and that of Paolo, were snatched away in the raging whirlwind. Overwhelmed by the endless suffering, Dante, completely exhausted, falls dead."

The storm returns, overtaking the orchestra once again as Francesca and Paolo are whisked away by its violent winds. The added coda ends the piece with a damning finality.

Instrumentation: 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 4 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, tamtam, harp and strings

Program note by **Michael Divino**.

Minnesota Orchestra

Thomas Wilkins, conductor

Minnesota Chorale and Twin Cities Choral Partners

Prepared by Kathy Saltzman Romey, Dr. Adrian Davis and Shekela Wanyama
29:11 International Exchange, Brendon Adams, artistic director

Thursday, May 19, 2022, 11 am	Orchestra Hall
Friday, May 20, 2022, 8 pm	Orchestra Hall
Saturday, May 21, 2022, 8 pm	Orchestra Hall

*With these concerts we honor the memory of **Dr. Marvin E. Goldberg** in appreciation of his generous estate gift to the Minnesota Orchestra.*

Franz Liszt *Les Préludes*, Symphonic Poem No. 3 ca. 16'

Joel Thompson *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed* ca. 15'

"Why do you have your guns out?" –Kenneth Chamberlain, 66
 "What are you following me for?" –Trayvon Martin, 17
 "Mom, I'm going to college." –Amadou Diallo, 23
 "I don't have a gun. Stop shooting." –Michael Brown, 18
 "You shot me! You shot me!" –Oscar Grant, 22
 "It's not real." –John Crawford, 22
 "I can't breathe." –Eric Garner, 43

*Minnesota Chorale and Twin Cities Choral Partners
29:11 International Exchange*

I N T E R M I S S I O N ca. 30'

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky *Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Opus 64* ca. 47'

Andante – Allegro con anima
 Andante cantabile con alcuna licenza
 Valse: Allegro moderato
 Finale: Andante maestoso – Allegro vivace –
 Moderato assai e molto maestoso

Additional artist profiles, as well as questions and space for personal reflection on Joel Thompson's *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed*, are provided in an insert. The audience is invited to share their reflections on an interactive wall space in the lobby during intermission.

Visual art in today's performance is from Shirin Barghi's #LastWords series, which was started in 2014 to capture the #LastWords of Black victims of police violence, and a reminder of the devastating toll that American racism and state violence takes on Black families and communities.

pre-concert	<p>Concert Preview with panel of speakers to be announced Thursday, May 19, 10 am, Target Atrium Friday, May 20, 7 pm, Target Atrium Saturday, May 21, 7 pm, Target Atrium</p>
thank you	This concert is co-sponsored by Trudi Anderson and Joseph Green.

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Thomas Wilkins, conductor

Thomas Wilkins is principal conductor of the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra and the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s artistic advisor, education and community engagement. He holds Indiana University’s Henry A. Upper chair of orchestral conducting. At the end of the 2020-21 season he concluded his long and successful tenure as music director of the Omaha Symphony Orchestra. His other past positions include resident conductor of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Florida Orchestra in Tampa Bay, and associate conductor of the Richmond Symphony in Virginia. He has led many orchestras throughout the U.S. and abroad; recent engagements have included returns to the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic,

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and the National Symphony Orchestra of Washington, D.C., to name a few. Devoted to promoting a life-long enthusiasm for music, Wilkins brings energy and commitment to audiences of all ages. He is hailed as a master at communicating and connecting with audiences. Following his highly successful first season with the Boston Symphony, *The Boston Globe* named him among the “Best People and Ideas of 2011.” In 2014, he received the prestigious Outstanding Artist award at the Nebraska Governor’s Arts Awards for his significant contribution to music in the state, while in March of 2018, the Longy School of Music awarded him the Leonard Bernstein Lifetime Achievement Award for the Elevation of Music in Society. In 2019 the Virginia Symphony bestowed Wilkins with its annual Dreamer’s Award. More: hollywoodbowl.com.



Shirin Barghi, visual artist

Shirin Barghi is an Iranian journalist, audio producer and documentary filmmaker based in Brooklyn, New York. She currently works as a Senior Producer for BRIC TV, where she covers issues of social justice, immigration, inequality and more. Her character-driven short documentaries have received four New York Emmy nominations, and her passion for bringing communities directly into the conversation have led her to produce or co-produce a number of town hall forums on topics including Women’s Rights, Islamophobia, the #MeToo movement, school segregation and police accountability. She was a producer on the team that won a 2018 New York Emmy in the Education/

one-minute notes

Liszt: *Les Préludes*

Finding inspiration in many sources, and written in a form new to the orchestral repertoire, Franz Liszt’s *Les Préludes* is the work that laid the foundation for many great symphonic poems.

Thompson: *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed*

Joel Thompson’s *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed* speaks of the grief, sadness and horror that the composer and the world have felt after witnessing recent killings of Black men by police and other authority figures in the U.S. The final words of seven of these unarmed men—Kenneth Chamberlain, Trayvon Martin, Amadou Diallo, Michael Brown, Oscar Grant, John Crawford and Eric Garner—serve as the text of each of the cantata’s seven movements, in a structure inspired by Haydn’s *The Seven Last Words of Christ*.

Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 5*

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s very popular Fifth Symphony—which journeys from minor to major and darkness to hope—is filled with wonderful mottos, orchestral color, balletic beauty and high drama. Watch for the finale’s false conclusion, a great climax that tricks many listeners into thinking the performance is complete.

School Program Category for *Class Divide: Breaking the Pattern of School Segregation*. Most recently, she is a producer of Brooklyn, USA—a bi-weekly audiovisual magazine series that blends short documentary, hyperlocal journalism, personal narratives, sound art and audiovisual experimentation. A graduate of New York University and The New School, her writing and visual work have appeared in *The Guardian*, *Souciant Magazine*, *The Huffington Post*, *Aljazeera*, *Vox* and beyond. She is currently co-directing a documentary about The Sirens, the longest running women's motorcycle club in New York. More: shirinbarghi.com.

Seven Last Words of the Unarmed advisory committee

Jalilia Abdul-Brown
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 Shemeka Bogan
 Mary K. Murray Boyd
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 Pitnarry Shin
 Dr. Marcus A. Simmons
 Shekela Wanyama

Minnesota Chorale and Twin Cities Choral Partners Prepared by Kathy Saltzman Romey, Dr. Adrian Davis and Shekela Wanyama Barbara Brooks, accompanist and artistic advisor

The Minnesota Chorale, principal chorus of the Minnesota Orchestra since 2004, has sung with the Orchestra for more than four decades, and is joined at this week's performances by additional singers from throughout the Twin Cities. The joint ensemble was prepared by Kathy Saltzman Romey, Dr. Adrian Davis and Shekela Wanyama. Founded in 1972 and led since 1995 by artistic director Romey, the Chorale is Minnesota's preeminent symphonic chorus and ranks among the foremost professional choruses in the U.S. More: mnchorale.org.

soprano

Kristi Bergland *
 Alyssa K. Breece *
 Deborah Carbaugh *
 Deborah Croker Treece
 Catherine Crosby-Schmidt *
 Monica deCausmeaker *
 Alyssa Ellson *
 Wendy Lukaszewski
 Anna Maher
 Erika Malpass
 Shana Marchand
 Meghan McCabe
 Merilu Narum
 Linda S. Neuman
 Alyssa Northrop
 Sherri Orr *
 Elizabeth Pauly *
 Adriana Pohl
 Natalie Scholz
 Polly Strege
 Shekela Wanyama *
 Jena Wilhelmi

alto

Bretta Alexander *
 Jaime Anthony
 Jill H. Apple
 Sarah Backman
 Kate Biederwolf
 Bethany Bobo
 Nan Buller
 Alyssa Burdick *
 Bridgette Cook-Jones
 Becca Donley
 Lynnette Fraser *
 Mallory Harrington
 Lindsey Hartjes
 Katy Husby
 Megan Kosse
 Maureen Long
 Mary B. Monson *
 Sharon Cogley Paulson
 Joan Potter
 Deborah E. Richman
 Kristen Schweiloch
 Sara Zanussi

tenor

Brendon Adams
 Jason José Bendezú
 Bryen Bogan
 Jared Campbell *
 Patrick L. Coleman
 Chris Crosby-Schmidt
 Daamir Johnson
 Scott D. McKenzie
 David Nordli *
 Mark Pladson
 Philip Reilly
 Scott Sandberg
 Luke Slivinski
 Erick Sood

bass

Peder Bolstad
 Scott Chamberlain
 Daniel J. Cosio *
 Mark J. Countryman
 Steve Cramer *
 James J. D'Aurora
 Adrian Davis *
 Elwyn Fraser *
 Stefan Gingerich
 Thomas Jermann
 Eric Johnson
 Joe Kastner *
 Evan Clay Kelly
 Bob Magil
 Ethan Murphy *
 Robert Oganovic
 Bob Peskin *
 Steve Pratt
 Peter Scholtz
 Marcus Simmons *
 Rick Treece
 Rick Wagner *

* section leader

29:11 International Exchange Brendon Adams, artistic director

The members of musical ensemble 29:11 come from the areas of the Cape Flats in Cape Town, South Africa. They have been trained by world-renowned musician Camillo Lombard and are currently under the direction of Brendon Adams, co-founder of New Hope International Exchange. They performed at Orchestra Hall most recently in November 2019 performances of Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*. More: nhixchange.org.

soprano

Gaylene Adams
 Ayanda Ayanda
 Megan Charles
 Cheryl Lottering
 Baetile Sebata

alto

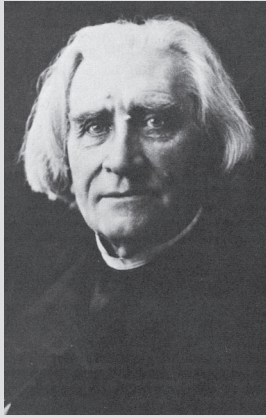
Nomvula Maneli
 Nikita Van Niebers

tenor

Storme Kock
 Jacques Laminie
 Roshane Solomons

bass

Brendon Adams
 Gilmore Garth
 Renaldo Hendricks



Franz Liszt

Born: October 22, 1811,
Raasdorf, Hungary

Died: July 31, 1886,
Bayreuth, Germany

***Les Préludes*, Symphonic
Poem No. 3**

Premiered: February 23, 1854

Although many might think of the Hungarian-born Franz Liszt as a piano virtuoso first and a composer second, he had considerable impact on his era in other respects. Liszt is credited with inventing the piano recital as we know it. He was also an influential patron and mentor of younger composers, particularly after 1850. As an orchestral composer, Liszt eschewed traditional symphonies for the most part, favoring instead a new type of composition: the symphonic poem.

Liszt’s concept was a single-movement orchestral piece, accompanied by a written program that the audience was intended to read prior to hearing the performance. Such a program was not the same as the printed program notes that you are currently reading. Rather, it introduced an extramusical association (for example, a poem or other literary source) intended to stimulate the listener’s imagination and subsequent grasp of the music.

Liszt was an educated and literate man. He perceived through program music an opportunity to merge different facets of romantic sensibility. Descriptive overtures such as Beethoven’s *Coriolan* (1807) and Mendelssohn’s *The Hebrides* (1829-32) prompted his thinking. In 1854, he coined the term “symphonic poem”—itself a combination of musical and literary terminology—as the subtitle for his latest orchestral work, *Tasso*. Eventually, he endowed the repertoire with a dozen examples of this new genre, all composed during the 13 years (1848-61) he spent in Weimar, Germany. Liszt’s widespread influence is eminently clear in the many tone poems of his younger contemporaries, most notably Richard Strauss.

from choral settings to orchestral masterwork

If we sought one symphonic poem that both encompassed the sweeping passions of 19-century romanticism and embodied the tempestuous career of Franz Liszt, *Les Préludes* would surely fit the bill. It has a bewildering and complex history. *Les Préludes* began

as an overture to four choral settings of poetry by Joseph Autran. By the time Liszt completed the score in 1854, he had discarded the choral pieces (which were never published) and reworked the overture to comport with the verse and philosophy of a more prominent French poet: Alphonse de Lamartine (1790-1869). Liszt’s score acquired the heading *Les Préludes (d’après Lamartine)*, connecting his music to the poet’s *Méditations poétiques*, a collection of 24 poems published in 1820.

The link is strengthened by the composer’s famous remarks at the front of the score:

“What is our life but a series of Preludes to that unknown song, the first solemn note of which is sounded by Death? The enchanted dawn of every existence is heralded by Love, yet in whose destiny are not the first throbs of happiness interrupted by storms?...”

The preface, which is more Liszt than Lamartine, provides the composer with latitude for widely contrasting emotional states: love and passion; the pastoral calm of nature’s beauty; spiritual conflict. They all find their way into the music. Through a process called thematic transformation (yet another Lisztian innovation), he moves through these widely varied states using only two basic themes. If *Les Préludes* is the only one of Liszt’s symphonic poems to have found a permanent place in the repertoire, it deserves that berth because of its sweeping grandeur, poetic themes, and inspired orchestration.

Instrumentation: 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, harp and strings

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Joel Thompson

Born: 1988,
The Bahamas

Seven Last Words of the Unarmed

Premiered: October 2015

"There was everything about me in there; there was no need to censor myself. It was as honest as possible." This is what Atlanta-based composer Joel Thompson said of the cantata he composed in 2014, *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed*, in a 2020 interview with *The New York Times*. The work is an intensely personal one, born of the grief, sadness and horror Thompson felt as the composer and the world witnessed the high-profile police killings of Michael Brown and Eric Garner in 2014. Thompson also found inspiration from visual artist Shirin Barghi's #lastwords project, which turned the last words spoken by 15 different Black men and boys murdered at the hands of police and armed vigilantes into a series of simple black and white drawings. The words of seven of these men—Kenneth Chamberlain, Trayvon Martin, Amadou Diallo, Michael Brown, Oscar Grant, John Crawford, and Eric Garner—serve as the text of each of the cantata's seven movements.

the journey to performance

Once the work was completed, Thompson put it away with no intent of hearing it performed, fearing there would be no one willing to listen to a piece with such sensitive subject matter. Spurred by friends, a read-through of the score was organized, after which Thompson was persuaded to send the score to Dr. Eugene Rogers, director of choral activities and associate professor of choral conducting at the University of Michigan. Despite the way Dr. Rogers was able to connect to Thompson's work, he too was hesitant to bring it to life. In a 2020 interview with the National Endowment for the Arts, Dr. Rogers relates: "I loved it and it resonated with me. But I didn't know how I was going to do it with an historic group of mostly non-African American singers. I worried how it might be received by this community. It took me a long time, but I couldn't put it away, I kept coming back to it."

Eventually, Dr. Rogers was able to find an avenue to be able to introduce the piece to his musicians, saying that "...the idea of focusing on a universal theme—of love, loss, and humanity..."

helped me figure out a way to get my students to consider the piece as not just a political piece of music, because it never was intended to be political. Whatever you thought about the different cases surrounding these seven individuals, we could all come together and unite around the value of human life." Dr. Rogers made a concerted effort to ensure that his musicians educated themselves on each of the individual seven men and their cases to ensure that his students could "form their opinions based on the facts."

Dr. Rogers and the University of Michigan Men's Glee Club premiered *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed* in fall 2015. The fears that both Thompson and Dr. Rogers had about performing a work of this nature were not completely unfounded. At the time of its premiere, Dr. Rogers' dean received letters. Several audience members stormed out of the auditorium in plain view of the choir, destroying their programs as they left. But in the intervening years since, *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed* has gained popularity and critical acclaim, as the United States continues to grapple with the continued killings of innocent, unarmed Black men, women and children at the hands of the police. "Here we are seven years later, and it's still frighteningly relevant," Thompson reflected during a recent visit to Minneapolis in which he discussed his music with Minnesota Orchestra musicians, staff and the community.

Detailed information about *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed* and U.S. policing and reforms, as well as educational resources, are available at sevenlastwords.org.

about the composer

Composer, pianist, conductor and educator Joel Thompson this month completes a doctor of musical arts degree in composition at the Yale School of Music. He received a bachelor's degree in 2010 and a master's degree in choral conducting in 2013, both from Emory University. From 2013 to 2015, Thompson was the director of choral studies and an assistant professor of Music at Andrew College in Cuthbert, Georgia, and from 2015 to 2017 he taught at Holy Innocents' Episcopal School in Atlanta. His teachers include Eric Nelson, William Ransom, Laura Gordy, Richard Prior, John Anthony Lennon, Kevin Puts, Robert Aldridge and Scott Stewart. As a fellow at the Aspen Festival, Thompson worked with Stephen Hartke and Christopher Theofanidis. He and Dr. Eugene Rogers won an Emmy Award in 2017 for Craft Specialty—Musical Composition/Arrangement" for their work on *Love, Life & Loss*, a documentary performance of *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed* from the Michigan chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. Thompson, who comes from a Jamaican family, was born in the Bahamas and moved with his family to Houston when he was 10, then settled a few years later in Atlanta.

a borrowed melody with complex meaning

Thompson weaves the melody of *L'homme armé*, an anonymously composed 15th-century secular French song, throughout *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed*. Within just a few years after its emergence, *L'homme armé* had been used as a *cantus firmus* in dozens of masses. Its only surviving verse warns of the dangers of the armed man:

The armed man should be feared.
Everywhere it has been proclaimed
That each man shall arm himself
With a coat of iron mail.
The armed man should be feared.

The use of *L'homme armé* in religious masses allowed composers to imbue their works with complex layers of meaning. Its inclusion here not only provides thematic unity throughout the piece, but also a stark reminder that man has perpetrated horrifically violent acts against fellow man for centuries.

the composer's description

Originally scored for tenor and bass choir, strings and piano, the work is heard this week in a newly revised version scored for soprano, alto, tenor and bass choir and orchestra. The composer has provided the following descriptions of the cantata's seven movements.

I. "Officers, why do you have your guns out?" Encapsulating the sense of gloom that arises upon the news of the death of another unarmed black man, the chorus rises from the funereal piano ostinato singing **Kenneth Chamberlain's** last words interpolated with the medieval tune, *L'homme armé doibt on doubter* - "The armed man must be feared." After the final iteration of the 66-year old's dying breath, the chorus repeats one important word: "why?"

II. "What are you following me for?" This movement uses the classical form of the fugue not only to portray **Trayvon Martin's** last moments trying to escape death, but also to sonically capture the daily paranoia of the black experience while driving on roads, walking on sidewalks, and congregating at various social gatherings. Quotes of *L'homme armé* in the strings underneath the imitative counterpoint in the voices lead to a climactic yell of surprise at the movement's end.

III. "Mom, I'm going to college." In New York, February of 1999, four police officers fired 41 shots at **Amadou Diallo**, a 23-year-old immigrant from Guinea. The undulating pattern in the piano simultaneously yields a sense of calm with its simple harmonic underpinning and unease with its odd 5/4 meter.

IV. "I don't have a gun! Stop shooting!" Of the seven movements, this one contains the most anger. Through the use of agitated rhythms

and multiple harmonic exclamations on the word "stop," the target of the rage is media portrayal of black men on the news, in comedies, and in dramas. Even in the aftermath of such tragedies, the rhetoric and images used to describe the deceased was markedly appalling across all media. This was the case, especially, for **Michael Brown**.

V. "You shot me. You shot me!" **Oscar Grant III's** exclamations of surprise and incredulity were caught on several cellphone recordings in the BART station in which he was murdered. The movement honoring his life is a sonic representation of this epidemic. Aleatoric spoken exclamations of the last words crescendo alongside the humming of *L'homme armé* in the style of the Negro spiritual. Underneath the cacophony, the pulsing C of the piano, violin, and viola persist unflinchingly like a heart monitor until the end.

VI. "It's not real." Although they were referring to the BB gun he was carrying in the Walmart where he was killed, **John Crawford's** last words escape the lips of thousands of African-Americans. Thus, the movement's beginning is the soundtrack to my mental utopia. Saccharine sweet and soaring, the voices and strings are joined by the piano "heart monitor" which persists and gradually infects the strings, like reality interrupting a reverie.

VII. "I can't breathe!" The decision of a Richmond County grand jury to not indict the officer responsible for **Eric Garner's** death was the impetus for this entire work, and it is only fitting that his last words end the piece. After using a mournful Byzantine texture for the first half of the movement, I tried to capture the panicked death thralls of asphyxiation in the music.

changing "one heart, one mind"

When Thompson visited Minnesota earlier this year, he reflected on the evolving meaning of *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed* both to himself and audiences. "I don't believe that one piece of music can completely change these big ideas and problems that we are tackling," he noted. "But I think it's a part of being an ethical artist nowadays, to understand the important role that community plays in music-making, that music can create community, that music can transcend boundaries....Holding these men and these victims and these communities in our memory will be a part of saving lives. I know that music has a transformative power, and if it could change one heart, one mind, then it's worth it."

Instrumentation: 4-part mixed chorus with orchestra comprising 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, marimba, harp, piano and strings

Program note by **Michael Divino**.



Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Born: May 7, 1840,
Votkinsk, Russia

Died: November 6, 1893,
St. Petersburg, Russia

Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Opus 64

Premiered: November 17, 1888

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony came from a moment of supreme personal tension for the composer—his disastrous and short-lived marriage—and in the process of completing it he collapsed. He suffered a nervous breakdown from which he recovered slowly, and this was followed by a creative dry spell that lasted nearly a decade.

creative once again

Then, in the winter of 1887-88, Tchaikovsky made a tour of Western Europe, conducting his own works in Leipzig, Hamburg (where he met Johannes Brahms), Berlin, Prague, Paris and London. Those audiences responded enthusiastically to his music (Brahms was an exception), and with his confidence somewhat bolstered, Tchaikovsky returned to Russia ready at last to attempt a new symphony. In April 1888, he moved into a villa in Frolovskoye, northwest of Moscow, where he could work on his new symphony and take long walks in the woods. His Fifth Symphony was done by August, and he led the premiere in St. Petersburg on November 17, 1888. Despite some initial misgivings, he was finally convinced that he had regained his creative powers.

The Fifth Symphony—full of those wonderful Tchaikovsky themes, imaginative orchestral color, and excitement—has become one of his most popular works. As he did in the Fourth, he builds this symphony around a motto-theme, and in his notebooks he suggested that the motto of the Fifth Symphony represents “complete resignation before fate.” But that is as far as the resemblance goes, for Tchaikovsky supplied no program for the Fifth Symphony, nor does this music seem to be “about” anything. The motto-theme returns in each of the four movements, often in quite different guises, and it may be best to understand it as a unifying device rather than as anything so dramatic as the Fourth Symphony's “sword of Damocles.” Listeners are of course free to supply their own interpretations, but despite the tantalizing hints

about “resignation before fate,” Tchaikovsky apparently regarded his Fifth Symphony as abstract music.

the music: a wealth of melodies, excitement—and a false ending

andante-allegro con anima. Clarinets introduce the somber motto-theme at the beginning of the slow introduction, and gradually this leads to the main body of the movement, marked *Allegro con anima*. Over the orchestra's steady tread, solo clarinet and bassoon sing the movement's surging main theme, and there follows a wealth of thematic material. This lengthy movement is built on three separate theme groups, full of those soaring and sumptuous Tchaikovsky melodies.

andante cantabile con alcuna licenza. Deep string chords at the opening of the *Andante cantabile* introduce one of the great solos for French horn, and a few moments later the oboe has the graceful second subject. For a movement that begins in such relaxed spirits, this music is twice shattered by the return of the motto-theme, which blazes out dramatically in the trumpets.

valse: allegro moderato. Tchaikovsky springs a surprise in the third movement—instead of the expected scherzo, he writes a lovely waltz. He rounds the movement off beautifully with an extended coda based on the waltz tune, and in its closing moments the motto-theme makes a fleeting appearance, like a figure seen through the mists.

finale: andante maestoso-allegro vivace-moderato assai e molto maestoso. However misty that theme may have seemed at the end of the third movement, it comes into crystalline focus at the beginning of the finale. Tchaikovsky moves to E major here and sounds out the motto to open this movement. The main body of the finale, marked *Allegro vivace*, leaps to life, and the motto-theme breaks in more and more often as it proceeds. The movement drives to a great climax, then breaks off in silence. This is a trap, and it often tricks the unwary into premature applause, for the symphony is not yet over. Out of the ensuing silence begins the real coda, and the motto-theme now leads the way on constantly-accelerating tempos to the (true) conclusion in E major.

Instrumentation: 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani and strings

Program note by **Eric Bromberger**.

Minnesota Orchestra and Sphinx Virtuosi

Osmo Vänskä, conductor

Erin Keefe, violin | Juho Pohjonen, piano

Thursday, June 2, 2022, 11 am | Orchestra Hall
 Friday, June 3, 2022, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall
 Saturday, June 4, 2022, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

Xavier Foley	<i>Ev'ry Voice</i> <i>Sphinx Virtuosi</i>	ca. 6'
Alberto Ginastera	<i>Finale furioso</i> , from Concerto for Strings <i>Sphinx Virtuosi</i>	ca. 5'
Felix Mendelssohn	Concerto in D minor for Violin, Piano and Strings Allegro – Andante (Recitativo) Adagio Allegro molto <i>Erin Keefe, violin</i> <i>Juho Pohjonen, piano</i>	ca. 36'
	I N T E R M I S S I O N	ca. 20'
Jaakko Kuusisto	Symphony	ca. 20'

A program note on Jaakko Kuusisto's Symphony is provided in an insert.

The national Sphinx Virtuosi Tour is made possible with the generous support of JPMorgan Chase & Co. and Robert F. Smith, with additional support from National Endowment for the Arts.

CD Signing: Join us in the Orchestra Hall lobby following the June 4 concert as Osmo Vänskä will sign the Orchestra's Mahler Symphony CDs, including the newest release of Mahler's Tenth Symphony.

pre-concert	Concert Preview with Phillip Gainsley Thursday, June 2, 10:15 am, Auditorium Friday, June 3, 7 pm, Auditorium Saturday, June 4, 7 pm, Auditorium
thank you	The Minnesota Orchestra is grateful to The Daniel N. and Constance B. Kunin Fund for supporting the commissioning of Jaakko Kuusisto's Symphony. This concert is co-sponsored by Karen and Stanley Hubbard .

Minnesota Orchestra concerts are broadcast live on Friday evenings on stations of [YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio](#), including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities. The May 6 concert will also be broadcast live on [Twin Cities PBS \(TPT-2\)](#) and available for streaming at minnesotaorchestra.org and on the Orchestra's social media channels.



Osmo Vänskä, conductor

Profile appears on page 10.



Erin Keefe, violin

Erin Keefe, the Minnesota Orchestra's concertmaster since 2011, is a highly-regarded soloist, chamber musician and festival artist. Her recent solos with the Orchestra have included performances of Massenet's *Meditation* from *Thaïs*, Weill's *Violin Concerto*, Dvořák's *Romance*, and Mozart's *Sinfonia concertante* with violist Matthew Lipman. She has been awarded the Avery Fisher Career Grant, the Pro Musicis International Award, and the Grand Prize in the Valsesia Musica International Violin Competition, Torun International Violin Competition, Schadt Competition and Corpus Christi International String Competition. She is an Artist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and performs locally with the *Accordo* ensemble. As a guest concertmaster, she has appeared in recent seasons with the New York Philharmonic, Pittsburgh

Symphony, Seoul Philharmonic and São Paulo Symphony Orchestra. In fall 2022 she will take an additional role as a distinguished faculty member of the Curtis Institute of Music. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.



Juho Pohjonen, piano

Finnish pianist Juho Pohjonen, who is widely regarded as one of today's most exciting instrumentalists, performs widely in Europe, Asia and North America, collaborating with symphony orchestras and playing in recital and chamber settings. He performed at the Minnesota Orchestra's season-opening concerts in September 2019 and on tour at Indiana University the following January. Last October he performed Daniel Bjarnason's piano concerto *Processions* with the Helsinki Philharmonic under the composer's baton. Other highlights of his 2021-22 season include performances with the Colorado Symphony, two chamber music concerts at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall and appearances on the Parlance Chamber Concerts and Cliburn Concerts series, as well as recitals in Helsinki and at Vancouver Recital Society. In 2019 he launched MyPianist, an AI-based iOS app that provides interactive piano accompaniment to musicians everywhere. His most recent recording with cellist Inbal Segev features cello sonatas by Chopin and Grieg, as well as Schumann's *Fantasiestücke*. More: juhopohjonen.com, kirshbaumassociates.com.



Sarah Hicks, broadcast host

For the concert on Friday, June 3, Sarah Hicks serves as host and writer of the Twin Cities PBS broadcast and online livestream, *This Is Minnesota Orchestra*, of which she has been the primary on-camera host and writer since the series launched in fall 2020. Hicks, who is the Minnesota Orchestra's principal conductor of Live at Orchestra Hall, has led a broad range of programs since joining the Orchestra as assistant conductor in 2006. Her notable projects here have included co-creating the *Inside the Classics* and *Sam & Sarah* series with Orchestra violist Sam Bergman; conducting a live-in-concert recording with singer-rapper Dessa; and leading original Orchestra programs and *Movies & Music* concerts. A specialist in film music and the film in concert genre, she premiered *Pixar in Concert* and Disney-Pixar's *Coco in Concert*. Her live concert recording of *A Celebration of the Music of Coco* at the Hollywood Bowl can be seen on Disney+ and her work on *The Little Mermaid Live* was broadcast on ABC. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.



Sphinx Virtuosi

The Sphinx Virtuosi are the nation's most dynamic, exhilarating professional chamber orchestra dedicated to increasing racial and ethnic diversity in classical music. Comprised of 18 of the nation's top Black and Latinx classical soloists, the Virtuosi are primarily alumni of the internationally renowned Sphinx Competition, and its members work together as cultural ambassadors reaching new audiences. This unique ensemble earned rapturous reviews from *The New York Times* during its highly acclaimed debut at Carnegie Hall in 2004, and they have returned to Carnegie Hall annually since 2006, performing to sold-out audiences and earning additional outstanding reviews from *The New York Times* each year.

Acting as a bridge between minority communities and the classical music establishment, the Sphinx Virtuosi continue to garner critical acclaim during their annual national tours to many of the leading venues around the country. Inspired by the Sphinx Organization's overarching mission, the Sphinx Virtuosi work to advance diversity in classical music while engaging young and new audiences through performances of kaleidoscopically varied repertoire. Masterpieces by Bach, Tchaikovsky, Vivaldi and Mozart are performed alongside the more seldom-presented works by composers of color, including Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson, George Walker, Michael Abels and Astor Piazzolla. The Sphinx Virtuosi's first recording was released in 2011 on the White Pine label and features music of Mendelssohn, Sibelius, Gabriela Lena Frank and George Walker. More: mkiartists.com, sphinxmusic.org.

violin

Patricia Quintero Garcia
Alex Gonzalez
Sandro Leal-Santiesteban
Jaqueline Jove
Meredith Riley
Emilia Mettenbrink
Jessica McJunkins
Maithéna Girault

viola

Celia Hatton
Robert Switala
Andrew Gonzalez
Omar Shelly

cello

Thomas Mesa
Eri Snowden-Rodriguez
Ismael Guerrero
Britton Riley

bass

Chris Johnson
Patricia Weitzel

one-minute notes

Foley: *Ev'ry Voice*

This recent work—an homage to *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, a song often referred to as the Black National Anthem—brings out the sonority and virtuosity of the strings to feature the familiar melodic material, while uncovering new timbres and sounds.

Ginastera: *Finale furioso*, from *Concerto for Strings*

The finale of Ginastera's *Concerto for Strings* is colorful, rhythmic and almost breathless, showcasing folk idioms and changing meters.

Mendelssohn: *Concerto for Violin, Piano and Strings*

The piano often takes the lead in this double concerto from the composer's youth, followed closely by violin, and the brilliant conclusion points to the greatness of the composer's mature work.

Kuusisto: *Symphony*

The Minnesota Orchestra commissioned Jaakko Kuusisto—a longtime friend and collaborator of Music Director Osmo Vänskä—to compose a new symphony as a capstone to Vänskä's final season. When Kuusisto passed away tragically in February at age 48, the work was not yet ready for performance, but his brother Pekka Kuusisto, also a renowned composer, has prepared an edition of the music to allow for this poignant world premiere performance.



Xavier Foley

Born: 1994,
Marietta, Georgia

Ev'ry Voice

Composed: 2020

This week's performances begin with a special guest ensemble, the Sphinx Virtuosi, taking the Orchestra Hall stage on its own to perform two works for string orchestra. (The musicians of the Sphinx Virtuosi will then join forces with the Minnesota Orchestra for the remainder of the program.) The performance is the newest development of the deepening bond between the Minnesota Orchestra and the Sphinx Organization, a Detroit-based, nationally-focused social justice organization—founded in 1997 by violinist Aaron Dworkin, and now led by President and Artistic Director Afa S. Dworkin—that is catalyzing change in the classical music world through its various programs that form a pipeline to develop and support diversity and inclusion in classical music. As another result of the connections between the two organizations, during the 2021-22 season the Minnesota Orchestra has welcomed two violinists and a violist selected from the Sphinx Orchestral Partners Auditions for one-year positions.

The Sphinx Virtuosi are deeply committed to the music of today's composers. (The ensemble's longtime composer in residence is Jessie Montgomery, a leading contemporary composer whose music has been heard on numerous Minnesota Orchestra programs in recent seasons.) Among the newest works commissioned by the Sphinx Organization for performance by the Sphinx Virtuosi is *Ev'ry Voice*, written in 2020 by Georgia-born composer and double bassist Xavier Foley.

a passion for performing and composing

Foley, who is a 2014 Sphinx Competition First Prize winner and in 2018 was awarded a prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant, is achieving great success as a composer, performer and educator—and sometimes combines his crafts, including this past March, when he appeared with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra as soloist in the world premiere of his own Double Bass Concerto. He has also been a featured soloist with the Dallas Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Nashville Symphony, Columbus Pro

Musica Chamber Orchestra, Sphinx Orchestra and the Sphinx Virtuosi, with which he performed at Carnegie Hall and on East and West Coast tours, and he plays often in chamber music settings at major venues. He is a 2016 graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied composition and performance with Edgar Meyer and Hal Robinson.

The version of *Ev'ry Voice* for string orchestra on this week's program is one of two that Foley has created for the Sphinx Organization—the other incorporating sung parts for Sphinx's professional vocal ensemble, Exigence. Its title and the basis of its musical material come from *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, the popular hymn that is often referred to as the Black National Anthem. The song's text was written in 1900 by James Weldon Johnson, who later led the NAACP, and was set to music by his brother John Rosamond Johnson—and it became the NAACP's official anthem and deeply intertwined with the African American Civil Rights Movement. The song continues to be well-loved and widely heard today, including with increasing frequency at major American sporting events.

comments from the Sphinx Virtuosi

The Sphinx Virtuosi offered the following description of *Ev'ry Voice* in a program note:

“This piece was created in 2020 as a special feature under Sphinx's program umbrella of ‘Land of the Free,’ which illuminates the wealth of musical talent among American composers. Appearing now as part of our ‘This is America’ digital program, this work has become a beloved standalone. The inspiration for the commission came at a time when the ideals of unity were invoked amidst uncertainty, tragedy, and hope. In his music, Foley brings out the sonority and virtuosity of the string instruments to feature the familiar melodic material, while uncovering new timbres and sounds, almost symbolically encouraging all of us to look and listen anew, beyond the isolation of the global pandemic and the racial and cultural divide in our country. Today's soundtrack is for the hopeful times ahead, ushered in by Foley's new tribute to a treasured piece of the American historical and musical heritage.”

Instrumentation: string orchestra

Program note by **Carl Schroeder**.



Alberto Ginastera

Born: April 11, 1916,
Buenos Aires, Argentina
Died: June 25, 1983,
Geneva, Switzerland

Finale furioso, from Concerto for Strings

Premiered: May 14, 1966

numerous composers of string quartets have later repainted their music on the larger canvas of a string orchestra, which most obviously offers a fuller sound and the added foundation of the bass, while also allowing for added lines and fuller harmonies, if the composer desires. The most famous example of this translation may be Samuel Barber's Adagio for Strings, written as the second movement of his String Quartet in 1936 and re-scored seven years later. The same seven-year gap applies to Alberto Ginastera's 1965 Concerto for Strings (*Concerto per Corde* in the original Spanish), which began its life as the String Quartet No. 2 in 1958.

The Concerto for Strings received its premiere on May 14, 1966, at the Third Latin American Music Festival in Caracas, Venezuela, with former Minnesota Orchestra Music Director Eugene Ormandy leading the Philadelphia Orchestra. This week's concerts feature its nearly breathless final movement, titled *Finale furioso*.

Argentine pioneer and international success

Ginastera, widely considered to be Argentina's most revered classical composer, lacked deep family roots in his native country since his parents had immigrated there from Italy—his mother was Italian and father was of Catalan descent—but he was deeply involved in promoting and developing Argentina's musical life. He spearheaded a national league of composers in Argentina and taught at prestigious schools in his home city, and many of his works were inspired by the country's folk music, particularly those in the earlier phases of his career. His domestic musical pursuits were subject to the whims of changing governments, but his international reputation grew steadily as he formed connections through studies in the U.S. on a Guggenheim Fellowship, and he eventually resettled in Switzerland late in life.

The String Quartet No. 2 that evolved into the Concerto for Strings was commissioned by the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge

Foundation, completed in 1958 and premiered by the Juilliard String Quartet at an international music festival in Washington, D.C. Although the music features rhythms rooted in the dance styles of Argentina, it dates from a period when Ginastera was incorporating more modern techniques such as polytonality and serialism. The Quartet No. 2 also drew inspiration from several of Béla Bartók's string quartets, most notably in the use of folk idioms and an archlike form in which the final movement recalls references from the first movement, and the inner movements refer to each other. Ginastera revisited this music on two occasions, expanding the instrumentation for string orchestra in 1965 (but trimming the number of movements from five to four) and then revising the string quartet to its final form in 1968.

The virtuosic *Finale furioso* featured at this concert is brilliant and frenzied music of perpetual motion, filled with syncopations, changing rhythmic patterns and references to ideas from earlier movements—demanding great virtuosity from the performers in music that is exciting and unpredictable, particularly in a roller-coaster closing minute when the tension ratchets up with each measure.

Instrumentation: string orchestra

Program note by Carl Schroeder.



Felix Mendelssohn

Born: February 3, 1809,
Hamburg, Germany
Died: November 4, 1847,
Leipzig, Germany

Concerto in D minor for Violin, Piano and Orchestra

Premiered: May 25, 1823
(private performance);
July 3, 1823 (public performance)

Like Mozart, Felix Mendelssohn was a miracle of musical precocity from childhood onward. The son of an immensely cultivated family (his grandfather was the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn), he made his piano debut at age 9, had his works performed when he was 10, and at 12 became a friend of Goethe, 60 years his senior. By the early 1820s, the boy—already a prolific composer—was confident enough of his music that he began to publish it.

Just before he began to give his music opus numbers, however, Mendelssohn completed a number of works for orchestra, including 12 symphonies for strings, a violin concerto and two concertos for two pianos. These final years of apprenticeship also produced the Concerto in D minor for Violin, Piano and Orchestra, which Mendelssohn completed of May 6, 1823, three months after his 14th birthday.

a rare combination

The idea of a concerto featuring violin and piano as solo instruments was unusual, though not unknown. The lyric, sustained sound of the violin and the percussive sound of the piano are difficult to combine in a concerto, which may help explain why this particular combination is so rare: Mozart had begun such a concerto, though he gave it up; Beethoven's Triple Concerto features piano, violin and cello.

Mendelssohn's Concerto for Violin and Piano offers graceful, accomplished writing for both instruments. The young composer wrote the piano part for himself, and the violin part for his friend Eduard Riez.

the music: piano takes the lead

allegro-andante (recitativo). In the opening *Allegro*, a long orchestra introduction gives way to a brilliant, leaping entrance by the piano, followed quickly by the violin. This sets a pattern that continues throughout the concerto: the piano takes the lead, the violin follows, and both share the development.

adagio; allegro molto. A gentle, tuneful *Adagio* is followed by a vigorous *Allegro molto*, which opens with a brilliant passage for piano. Though the thematic material of this concerto may not be particularly distinctive, the music remains amiable, accomplished and pleasing throughout, an astonishing achievement by a 14-year-old. And—in the brilliance of the final movement—it looks ahead to the music of the more mature Mendelssohn.

Instrumentation: solo violin, solo piano and orchestra comprising 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani and strings

Program note by *Eric Bromberger*.



Jaakko Kuusisto

Born: January 17, 1974,
Helsinki, Finland

Died: February 23, 2022,
Oulu, Finland

Symphony

Premiering: June 2, 2022

This week's performances feature the world premiere of Finnish composer, conductor and violinist Jaakko Kuusisto's *Symphony*, his final work, which he was in the process of composing when he died this past February at the age of 48. His younger brother Pekka Kuusisto, who is also a renowned composer-conductor-violinist, has acted as editor in preparing the performance materials for this premiere performance, for which the conductor's score arrived after this issue went to press; a program note and profile of Kuusisto are provided in an insert.



In September 2017, Osmo Vänskä led the Minnesota Orchestra in an all-Finnish program that included Jaakko Kuusisto's Violin Concerto, featuring soloist Elina Vähälä, for whom the work was composed.

Minnesota Orchestra

Osmo Vänskä, conductor

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Friday, June 10, 2022, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

Saturday, June 11, 2022, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

Sunday, June 12, 2022, 2 pm | Orchestra Hall

*We gratefully acknowledge the support of **Louise and Doug Leatherdale** in the presentation of these concerts, and their support for the work of Osmo Vänskä.*

Gustav Mahler

Symphony No. 8 in E-flat major, *Symphony of a Thousand*

ca. 80'

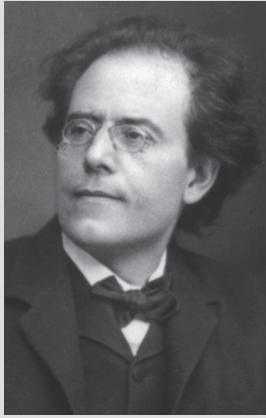
Hymnus: Veni, creator spiritus

Final Scene from Faust

Profiles of the soloists and choirs, rosters of choir members, and the text and translation of Mahler's Symphony No. 8 are provided in an insert. Osmo Vänskä's profile appears on page 10 of *Showcase*. The translation will also be provided as surtitles; translation by Sandra Hyslop.

Broadcast and digital use of this concert is made possible by David and Shari Boehnen.

Minnesota Orchestra concerts are broadcast live on Friday evenings on stations of [YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio](#), including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities.



Gustav Mahler

Born: July 17, 1860,
Kalischt, Bohemia

Died: May 18, 1911,
Vienna, Austria

Symphony No. 8 in E-flat major, *Symphony of a Thousand*

Premiering: September 12, 1910

during the decade that Gustav Mahler was director of the Vienna Court Opera, only the summer holidays were free to him for composing. Of all his symphonies, none was created more swiftly than the gigantic Eighth, written in a spirit of exultation and assurance in the span of a mere eight weeks. Because of the mass of singers and enlarged orchestra it demands, it is known as the *Symphony of a Thousand*—a title Mahler disliked but was used to publicize the work's premiere. Completing his draft of the score on August 18, 1906, Mahler jubilantly addressed the conductor Wilhelm Mengelberg: "I have just finished my Eighth! It is the biggest thing I have done so far. And so individual in its content and form that I cannot describe it in words. Imagine that the whole universe begins to vibrate and resound. These are no longer human voices, but planets and suns resolving..."

Indeed, the voices of the Symphony No. 8 seem to transcend their humanity, for Mahler puts them to work as if they were instruments. Voices and orchestra are so interwoven, sharing equally in the sublime musical ideas, that the work is no mere symphony with singing, but a genuine marriage of vocal and instrumental sonorities. Why such monumental forces? Perhaps to match the scale of the thought, which expresses not only the hope for all mankind for redemption, but of the artist for the breath of inspiration.

"my greatest work"

In 1906, as soon as Mahler had unpacked his bags at Maiernigg, on the shores of the beautiful Carinthian lake known as the Wörthersee, he was tormented by a fortnight of despairing idleness. His wife recalled that "he was haunted by the spectre of failing inspiration." One morning, just as he entered the little lakeside cottage where he tried to work (sparsely furnished, with only a piano and the collected works of Kant and Goethe), the exalted idea of the ancient Latin hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* (Come, Creator Spirit), took hold of him and—in his own words—"shook me and drove me on for the next eight weeks until my greatest work was done." Recalling how quickly the work evolved, he noted in a letter to his wife Alma: "In art as in life I am at the mercy of spontaneity. If I had to compose, not a note would come."

While the impresario Emil Gutmann was making preparations for the premiere of the Eighth Symphony in Munich on December 12, 1910, Mahler was busy conducting in America; in his absence, Bruno Walter was charged with the preliminary rehearsals, though Mahler returned in time to lead the forces of just over a thousand participants in the final rehearsals. Walter has left a vivid account of that week:

"Those were great days for us who were privileged to attend the rehearsals of the Eighth. The immense apparatus obeyed with devotion the master's effortless direction. All performers were in a state of solemn exaltation, and this was true, above all, of the children, whose hearts he had captured from the beginning. It was a great moment when, greeted by the thousands who filled the giant exhibition hall, he took his place facing the thousand performers—at the zenith of his life and yet marked for an early death—when his music invoked the creator spiritus by whose fires it had been generated within him, and when from all lips burst forth the yearning call of his life...."

"When the last note of the performance had died away and the waves of enthusiastic applause reached him, Mahler ascended the steps of the platform, at the top of which the children's choir was posted. The little ones hailed him with shouts of jubilation and,

one-minute notes

Mahler: Symphony No. 8, *Symphony of a Thousand*

In Mahler's Eighth Symphony, a massive force of voices and orchestra are so interwoven, sharing equally in the sublime musical ideas, that the work is no mere symphony with singing, but a genuine marriage of vocal and instrumental sonorities. This mystical and stirring work, of which Mahler led the premiere performance only eight months before his death, brings together a medieval hymn (molded into an immense sonata structure) and the final scene of Goethe's verse drama, *Faust*.

walking down the line, he pressed every one of the little hands that were extended towards him...At the performance itself he seemed to be at the height of his power—the uplifting of his soul once more had given back to the tired heart its onetime vigor. But it was the last performance of one of his creations that he himself conducted.”

Eight months later, Mahler was gone, leaving a mystical and stirring work that brings together a medieval hymn (molded into an immense sonata structure) and the final scene of Goethe’s verse drama, *Faust*. Only Mahler would have dared such a conception for a choral symphony.

the music: playing by its own rules

hymnus: *veni, creator spiritus*. Like Mahler’s other symphonies, the Eighth proceeds according to its own rules. A massive chord resounding from the organ heralds the tumultuous cry of the two choruses, *Veni, veni, creator spiritus*, a march-like theme that functions as the principal subject of the 25-minute sonata movement. A contrasting theme, a sweetly expressive setting of the third and fourth line as the poet begs for grace, is given to the soprano. The development gets under way in an orchestral interlude marked by the tolling of bells. In its course, the main theme is transformed into a striking new cry (beginning with the word *Accende*—“Kindle the light of our understanding”), and its summit is crowned with the double fugue based on the original theme. Additional brass are summoned for the gleaming coda. “No other work of Mahler,” observed Walter, “is so saturated with the spirit of fervent affirmation.”

final scene from *Faust*. Of all the composers who drew inspiration from Goethe’s drama *Faust*—and the ranks include, among others, Berlioz, Liszt, Schumann and Gounod—none may have more closely paralleled the poet’s intention than Mahler. He restricts himself entirely to the closing scene of Part II, Faust’s triumphant redemption, a scene unmanageable on the stage, which Goethe never intended anyhow. The original choruses and solos are given perfect realization by Mahler, and though the sections vaguely trace the slow movement, scherzo and finale of a more traditional symphony, the unorthodox structure emanates from the flow of the poetry itself.

The final scene traces Faust’s journey to heaven, and his course to salvation counterbalances the supplication of the opening hymn to the Spirit. The setting is a mountainous landscape where, on different levels, hermits have built their cells, each symbolizing a level of perfection. Faust’s remains are borne by angels who affirm the central thesis of the drama, “Whoever strives with all his power, we are allowed to save.” He is welcomed by one of the penitents, Gretchen, who loved him on earth and now, in eternity, has been transfigured into one of the wise. The blessed

boys announce that Faust’s mission in heaven is to instruct those whose lives on earth were terminated before they could range through all the human experiences he has known. Finally, the Mater Gloriosa, symbol of the enthroned Virgin, ushers Faust into eternal happiness.

Instrumentation: 8 solo voices, double chorus and children’s choir with orchestra comprising 5 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 4 oboes, English horn, 3 clarinets, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, 4 bassoons, contrabassoon, 8 horns, 8 trumpets (4 offstage), 7 trombones (3 offstage), tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, tamtam, triangle, glockenspiel, chimes, 2 large bells, 2 harps, piano, celesta, organ, harmonium, mandolin and strings

Program note by *Mary Ann Feldman*.



The first American performance of Mahler’s *Symphony of a Thousand* was given on March 2, 1916, by the Philadelphia Orchestra, choir and soloists under the direction of Leopold Stokowski. The Philadelphia Orchestra was later led from 1936 to 1980 by its longest-tenured music director Eugene Ormandy, who had been the Minnesota Orchestra’s music director from 1931 to 1936 when it was known as the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra.

Indigo Girls with the Minnesota Orchestra

Michelle Merrill, conductor

Friday, June 24, 2022, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall
Saturday, June 25, 2022, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall



Twenty-five years after the release of their debut studio album as the **Indigo Girls**, Amy Ray and Emily Saliers have declined to slow down with age. With a legacy of releases and countless U.S. and international tours behind them, the Indigo Girls have forged their own way in the music business. Selling over 14 million records, they are the only duo with top 40 titles on the Billboard 200 in the '80s, '90s, '00s and '10s. In their newest release, *Look Long*, issued in May 2020, they have reunited with their strongest backing band to date to create a stirring and eclectic collection of songs that finds them chronicling their personal upbringings with more specificity and focus than they have on any previous song cycle.

In 2012, Saliers and Ray began collaborating with a pair of orchestrators to prepare large-scale arrangements of their songs to perform with symphonies around the country, including the Minnesota Orchestra in February 2019. With this successful project, the duo created a seamless blend of folk, rock, pop and classical that elevated their songs to new heights without scarping the emotional intimacy and honesty that have defined their music for decades. In 2018 they released a live album of their orchestral performance with the University of Colorado Symphony Orchestra.

The power of unity, both in music and in life, has been an Indigo Girls calling card ever since they burst into the spotlight with their 1989 self-titled breakout album. Since then, the band has racked up a slew of Gold and Platinum records, taken home a coveted Grammy Award, earned the respect of high-profile peers, and collaborated with artists ranging from Michael Stipe to Joan Baez. The duo has balanced their long, successful musical career by supporting numerous social causes. Both on and off the stage, Saliers and Ray have secured their spot as one of the most legendary musical acts of this generation. More: indigogirls.com.



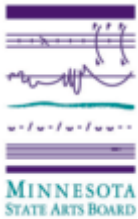
Conductor **Michelle Merrill** has been inspiring audiences throughout the country with her sharply detailed and vibrant performances. A passionate and dynamic artist, she served four years as the assistant and then associate conductor of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. In addition to her growing guest conducting schedule, she currently serves as the music director of the Coastal Symphony of Georgia. Her recent and upcoming engagements include concerts with the National Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Opera, National Arts Centre Orchestra of Ottawa, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, River Oaks Chamber Orchestra, Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Toledo Symphony Orchestra, Sarasota Orchestra, West Virginia Symphony, Symphoria (Syracuse), Princeton Symphony Orchestra, and the Round Top Music Festival Institute. From 2012 to 2015 she served as assistant conductor of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic. She is a recipient of a 2016 Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award as well as the prestigious 2013 Ansbacher Conducting Fellowship. More: michelle-merrill.com.

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For information on giving at these or other levels, please call Bonnie Marshall at 612-371-7122 or visit our website at minnesotaorchestra.org/waystogive.

Laureate Spotlight: Dr. Marvin Goldberg



Dr. Marvin Goldberg excelled at all he did. His two passions were medicine and music.

Blending these passions as Chief of Staff at the University of Minnesota Hospital, Dr. Goldberg helped found the University of Minnesota Health Sciences Orchestra. He delighted in playing his violin with the other doctors, nurses and staff at the University, making their orchestra sing.

While his primary instrument was violin, his cousin, Dr. Stanley Goldberg, who was like a brother to him, remembers Marvin coming home from junior high school with a tuba bigger than he was because "that was what the school band needed." This says so much about Marvin's approach to the life he led. He contributed to the greater good of the community. He did this right up to the end of his lifetime, by making a significant gift to the Minnesota Orchestra through his estate. His generosity will help make the Minnesota Orchestra sing for years to come. We are honored to be part of his legacy.

With the Hope and Humanity concerts on May 19, 20 and 21, conducted by Thomas Wilkins, we honor Dr. Marvin Goldberg's memory and his love of music, community and the Minnesota Orchestra.

For more information about how you can make a difference for the Minnesota Orchestra with a planned gift, please contact Emily Boigenzahn, Director of Planned Giving, at 612-371-7138 or eboigenzahn@mnorch.org.

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